



LAKE FOREST DISTRICT 67 SCHOOLS

Date: August 28, 2008

To: District 67 Staff

From: Rebecca Leafman, Joe Malin, and the Student Development Committee

RE: Emotional Wellness Initiative – Introduction to Lesson Plans and Activities Surrounding District-Wide Character Traits

To all new staff: Welcome to District 67; and to all returning staff, welcome back! In 2008–09, we are excited and eager to continue our emotional wellness journey; last year, we made great progress. First and foremost, we achieved a consensus around five district-wide character traits to model, teach, and celebrate! The first of these, TEAMWORK, will be our primary focus for the months of September and October. However, all five traits – TEAMWORK, CARING, HONESTY/INTEGRITY, RESPECT, and RESPONSIBILITY – are interconnected, and it is absolutely fine to focus on any trait at any time.

Teamwork has been defined as working cooperatively to achieve a common goal. In 2008–09, we envision continued dynamic teaming and sharing in order to provide our students with a joyous and extraordinary learning environment.

We are very fortunate! Members of the Student Development Committee worked diligently to locate and develop lesson plans and activities related to cultivating Teamwork. Also, as the school year continues, lesson plans and activities geared towards the other traits will be added. We hope that you will take advantage of these outstanding resources. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any of us with questions or innovative ideas!

Your Proud Partners,

The Student Development Committee

Rebecca Leafman, Asst. Principal DPM–W, Proud Director of the Student Development Committee

Joe Malin, Coordinator of Research and Assessment

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Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Defining Teamwork

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork/Building relationships in the classroom

Grade level

Can be adapted for all grades

Overview

Groups of students work together to create a definition for teamwork. Additionally, students work together to establish guidelines for effective teamwork in the classroom. This activity can be used with all character words.

Materials

Markers

Construction paper

Poster boards

Procedures

1. Students are split into small groups (4–5 kids per group). Each group should work together to come up with 3 to 5 words that mean “teamwork” to them.
2. Each group should then come up with their own definition of teamwork. This definition should be a sentence or two that describes what teamwork means to them.
3. Once each group comes up with a definition, the class can share what each group came up with.
4. Once definitions have been shared, each group will come up with 3 guidelines for working in groups. These guidelines should help students succeed when working in groups throughout the year.
5. Each member of the group will trace their hand on a piece of construction paper. They will then cut out their hand and write their name on it. Each hand will be placed on the group’s poster board. The group will write their definition and guidelines of teamwork on their poster board underneath their handprints.
6. The boards can be placed on the walls throughout the room.

Assessment

Observe to make sure all students are participating and helping each other.

Credit: A to Z Teacher Stuff (R.L, 6th grade teacher)

<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Which Person in This Group?

Connections to Character Traits

Large group activity emphasizes teamwork among students.

Grade Level

All

Overview

This large group activity is a great teamwork warm up for any class to kick off the school year. Students have to work together to answer the questions on the work sheet. In doing so, they will learn more about each other.

Materials

“Which Person in This Group” activity sheet

Procedures

Divide class into four even groups.

Ask each group to work together as a team to answer all of the questions on the worksheet.

Assessment

Observe students as they discuss questions.

Credit

Joe Wittmer, Ph.D. and Diane W. Thompson, Ph.D.

Which Person In This Group Worksheet

1. _____ Has the darkest eyes?
2. _____ Has the longest name?
3. _____ Could hide in the smallest space?
4. _____ Has the most clothes on?
5. _____ Has the youngest brother or sister?
6. _____ Can smile the biggest?
7. _____ Can make the scariest faces?
8. _____ Has the most brothers and sisters?
9. _____ Has the fewest brothers and sisters?
10. _____ Has the longest legs?
11. _____ Can make the silliest faces?
12. _____ Can whistle the loudest?
13. _____ Is wearing the most colors?
14. _____ Has the longest hair?
15. _____ Has the shortest name?
16. _____ Has lived in the most places?
17. _____ Has the most pets?
18. _____ Can hum the lowest?
19. _____ Has the oldest parents?
20. _____ Can stand on one foot the longest?

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Two Truths and a Dream Wish

Connections to Character Traits

Team Building/Building a Community/ Getting to Know Each Other

Grade Level

2–8

Overview

A good get-to-know-you icebreaker in which each person says two truths and one lie or wish. The goal is to figure out which statement is true.

Materials

Index Cards

Procedures

1. Have everyone sit in a circle. Each person prepares three statements, two of which are true. One is a statement that they wish to be true. For example, someone who has never been to Hawaii might say: “I have visited Hawaii when I was young.” This interesting spin often leads to unexpected, fascinating results, as people often share touching wishes about their lives.
2. In any order, the person shares the three statements with the entire group.
3. The object of the game is to figure out which statement is a wish. The group can vote to decide which one they believe is the untruth– or wish.

Assessment

Evaluate the activity by observing the students. They should be learning new and interesting things about each other.

Source

KTI class packet

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Find Ten Things in Common

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork, cooperation

Grade Level

This lesson is appropriate for students in grades first through eighth. When working with younger participants, decrease the number of facts that they need to find in common.

Overview

To create group cohesion and help participants see that there are many similarities between them that they did not know existed. Create a sense of unity.

Materials

Paper and writing utensils for all participating

Procedure

1. Divide the meeting participants into groups of four or five people by having them number off. (You do this because people generally begin a meeting by sitting with the people they already know best).
2. Tell the newly formed groups that their assignment is to find ten things they have in common, with every other person in the group, that have nothing to do with school/work. Also mention that body parts [we all have arms, legs, etc.] and clothing do not count. This helps the group explore shared interests more broadly.
3. Tell the groups that one person must take notes and be ready to read their list to the whole group upon completion of the assignment.
4. Ask for a volunteer to read their whole list of things in common first to their small group. Then, ask each group to share their whole list with the whole group. Because people are your best source for laughter and fun, the reading of the lists always generates a lot of laughter and discussion. You can also catch the drift of the conversation in the small groups based on the transitions made from item to item.
5. This team building activity takes 10–20 minutes, depending on the number of groups. To keep the activity to ten minutes, after seven minutes of brainstorming together, tell the groups that the lists they have created are perfect, no matter how many items they have and then debrief.

Assessment

Based on observation and discussion.

Credit

Adapted from Team Building packet from KTI class.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Working Together Vocabulary

Connections to Character Traits

Introduce “teamwork” vocabulary to students for understanding. Teachers can use common language for consistency in classrooms.

Grade Level

This lesson is most appropriate for 4th–8th graders.

Overview

This vocabulary sheet provides teachers with common language to use with students when discussing “teamwork”. Students will begin to learn the important words to know as they learn more about working together.

Materials

Vocabulary Worksheet

Procedures

Do any of the teamwork activities from this resource.

After completing activity, review with class which vocabulary words they feel they used/experienced during the activity.

Refer to vocabulary words through September/October TEAMWORK months as well as other months as deemed appropriate.

Assessment

Group discussion, teacher observation

Credit

That’s LIFE! Social Language

Working Together

Vocabulary: Working Together

Here are some words to know as you learn more about working well with others.

Annoy	to disturb or bother someone
Social skills	abilities to get along with other people
Punctual	on time for something
Embarrass	to make someone self-conscious or uncomfortable about something
Attentive	observant; paying attention to what's going on
Value	to consider something important; to rate something highly
Cooperation	the act of cooperating; working together for a common goal
Mutual benefit	something that helps all the members in a group get what they want or need
Appropriate	suitable for a situation; correct or proper
Inappropriate	unsuitable for a situation; incorrect or improper
Respect	to admire someone or something; to hold someone or something in high esteem
Opinion	a personal belief about something; your own judgment
Empathy	the act of understanding someone else's situation or emotions; the ability to put yourself in someone else's place
Style	a particular way or manner of doing something (learning style, thinking style, etc.)
Acceptance	tolerance for other people's differences and mistakes
Mannerism	an unconscious habit or behavior, such as biting your lips or bouncing your foot up and down while you're sitting

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Teamwork Puzzle

Connections to Character Traits

Team Building

Grade Level

All

Overview

Using the letters in “TEAMWORK” students create a puzzle. This can be adapted to use the letters in any character word, for example, “RESPECT” or “CARING”.

Materials

Poster board

Markers

Procedures

1. Using the letters in “TEAMWORK”, cut each letter into 2 or 3 puzzle pieces each so there is a piece for each child and the teacher. You may want to make a few extra pieces in case you get a new student or a student is added to your class.
2. Place each student’s name and the teacher’s name on separate pieces.
3. Each person decorates his/her piece as they wish.
4. Mingle around the room in search of the matching piece or pieces.
5. Record on the board in random order the letters that have been formed.
6. Have students unscramble these and reveal “teamwork”.
7. This teamwork puzzle is then displayed in the room for the remainder of the “teamwork” theme.

Assessment

Cooperation and teamwork of the class

Source

www.theteacherscorner.net

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Creating a Class Puzzle

Connection to Character Traits

This activity is geared toward teamwork, acceptance, and diversity but can be modified to work with any core value.

Grade Level

Most appropriate for 2nd to 5th grade but can be used in upper grade levels as well.

Overview

Students are given puzzle pieces and asked to create a piece that represents who they are using pictures, words, drawings etc. After they are finished, discuss the importance of being an individual and accepting others for who they are. Next step, student silently finds the others who fit with their puzzle piece and put it together. After complete, discuss teamwork and the character traits necessary to work together.

Materials

Poster Board

Markers

Variety of media (pencil, markers, crayon, magazine pictures

Tape

Procedure

*Teacher should have puzzle pieces cut out for each student and staff member included in this activity. You may want to make a few extra pieces in case you get a new student or a student is added to your class.

Puzzles are made on poster board, outlined with marker and cut out. Each puzzle (one poster board) should have 5 or 6 pieces and all the posters together should be equal to the number of students/staff.

* Pass out pieces and ask students to decorate their piece to represent themselves. It is helpful to brainstorm a list of adjectives (kind, helpful, creative, athletic etc) to help them get started. This step takes some time if you want a creative finished product.

*While students are working discussion can take place about the importance of individuality and accepting others for whom they are.

*When pieces are complete, explain that students are to find the other pieces of their puzzle (remember, each poster is a different color).

*They are to get into groups SILENTLY. Once in puzzle groups, teacher hands out tape and they are to tape puzzle together from the backside, again silently. The group should raise their hands when complete.

*While students are putting the pieces together, the teacher can list character traits and behaviors seen exhibited (leadership, teamwork, communication, support, etc)

*Posters are displayed and discussion takes place about the importance of teamwork and being able to work as a part of a group.

*Activity can be explored further by making the puzzles into a large classroom puzzle. Even further, each classroom can come together and make a huge school puzzle. Discussion can take place regarding working together as a class, school, community, world etc.

Assessment

Teacher observation

Students journal and reflect upon the activity.

Credit

Jeni Pilcher

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

How to: Get Started. Establish a Positive Community Atmosphere in your Classroom Through Team Building Activities

Connection to Character Traits

Develops teamwork

Grade Level

Grades 3–8

Overview

Three easy and fun getting to know you games that can be played at the beginning of the school.

Materials Needed

Koosh ball

Procedure

1. Zig-zag-zop
 - Everyone is in a circle. One person starts by saying, “zig” and looking at another person.
 - That person now says, “zag” while looking at another person.
 - Now the third person says, “zop” while looking at another person and pointing at them with a fully extended arm. Only “zop” has the arm motion. If a person moves their arm on “zig” or “zag” he/she is out and must sit down. If a person does not move their arm on “zop” he/she is out and must sit down.
 - Advanced: Speed it up. If a person hesitates, he/she is out.
2. Counting
 - Class forms a circle, looking down with no eye contact.
 - One person at a time, but in no preplanned order or pattern, the group needs to count from one to ten.
 - If two people speak at once, the group starts over at one.
 - If you get past ten...see how high you can go!
3. Koosh Ball
 - Everyone stands in a circle. One person starts by throwing the koosh ball to another person.
 - Continue passing the ball around so that everyone gets the ball once. The ball should end up with the person who started it.
 - Remember the order and then time how fast the group can get the ball through everyone.
 - See if the group can beat their fastest time.

Assessment

Observation of how students interact with one another. Group discussion.

Credit

Establish a Positive Community Atmosphere in your Classroom Through Team-Building Activities by Lisa Kihn

www.teachersnetwork.org/ntol/howto/start/teambuild.htm

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Getting Along with Others

Connection to Character Traits

Team Building – can be applicable to all core values depending on which values a student chooses to work on.

Grade Level

K–5

Overview

Introduces the key concepts of cooperation, peer relations, interpersonal skills, getting along with others and team-building

Materials

Pencil

Paper

Mentioned worksheets can be downloaded at

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3811> (optional)

Procedures

Pre-activities

It could be helpful for students to explore how different character traits relate to either getting along with others or getting in trouble with others.

Students can explore how the following character traits improve peer relations: responsibility, respect, courage, fairness, citizenship, honesty, kindness, and perseverance.

Have students explore negative consequences when students do not get along with each other.

Examples may include: Feel rejected, feel unhappy, Excluded from activities, Get in trouble, Blamed for accidents, disliked by peers, Parents are ashamed, Unpopular, and Lose friends easily.

Activities

1. Instruct students to explore different benefits for getting along with others. Have them write down 1–2 positive consequences for getting along with others. Then brainstorm the class' responses by listing them on the board. Have students add class ideas that are generated to their worksheet. (See attachment for Lesson 1) (Include benefits like: Have more friends, Not left out of games, Win more team games, Parents are proud, Fewer fights, Less arguments, Others share more, Don't get as hurt, Makes the world a better place to live, Get special privileges, and Feel happier.)

2. Have students consider different behaviors that help us get along with others. State all behaviors positively. For example, instead of recording "Don't

lie,” rephrase as “Tell the truth” or “Be honest.” Each student should write down 2–3 behaviors individually before having the class share responses. (See attachment for Lesson 1). When compiling class responses on the board, have students include all behaviors on their individual worksheets. (Positive behaviors can include: Share with others, Help others, Tell the truth, Invite others to play, Compliment others, Respect others, Be polite, Use my manners, Smile, Follow rules, Be patient, Forgive others, and Admit mistakes.)

3. After students have recognized many of the benefits of getting along with others and specific ways to do so, they are ready to evaluate their own behaviors. Using different behavioral opposites, have students place an “X” to best describe their behavior along the continuum. You can use a Likert scale or simple line between behaviors. (See attachment for Lesson 2) (Behavior opposites can include: Lies/Tells the Truth, Selfish/Sharing, Positive/Negative Attitude, Patient/Impatient, Blames Others/Admits Mistakes, Inconsistent/Dependable, and Puts Others Down/Stands Up For Others.)

4. After students evaluate their current behaviors, have them identify the three behaviors that most impede their getting along with others (on the worksheet, they are the “X’s” that are on the left).

5. Then, have students determine specific ways to engage in the opposite behaviors more often. For example, a student with the behavior “Lies” might decide to “Tell the truth” more on the bus and at lunch. Another example could include how a student who is “Selfish” could decide that he/she could “Share” more compliments, praise, and belongings with classmates.

6. In conclusion, distribute index cards for students to record the three targeted behaviors for them to concentrate on improving. Ask where the index cards can be placed to be most helpful to use as a daily reminder. Some students will choose to have them taped on their desk, others will want it on their mirror at home, while others will want it taped to their notebook, locker, planner, or book bag.

Assessment

Teacher observation, group discussion, review of student work

Credit

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3811>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Learning to Compromise

Connections to Character Traits

The students will learn to compromise when working in a group. This is a necessary skill to use in TEAMWORK.

Grade Level

K-5

Overview

Teachers are going to talk about what it means to compromise. See attached worksheet.

Materials

None

Procedures

Introduce the skill and ask questions:

- What does compromise mean?
- How does a group react to a person who always has to have his/her way all the time?
- Why is it important when working in a group to be flexible?
- When people put and complain, when their ideas are not used, how does that affect the group?

Definition of the skill:

Compromise means to give and take. A person who compromises is flexible and understands that when working in a group, your ideas will not always be used or you may not always have your way. It is important not to pout or complain if the group decides to use someone else's idea instead of yours. Groups often use the "majority rules" vote when deciding whose ideas to use. Sometimes your ideas will be used, sometimes they will not.

Establish the need:

- The group will not get its work done if group members are not willing to compromise.
- You may be viewed as difficult to work with if you pout or complain when your ideas are not used. Students may not want to work with you again.
- Compromising shows that you are willing to work with others.
- Being flexible shows the teacher you want to learn.

Skill steps for compromising:

- State your idea.
- If your ideas are different from group members, be willing to listen, as it could be a very good idea. Maybe you can combine your ideas.
- Be willing to use someone else's idea since there is a good chance one of your will be used in a different area.
- If the rest of the group wants to use an idea, even if it is not yours, be flexible.
- Control your feelings if your idea is not used.

Role Play:

- Your group is making a poster on transportation used in a foreign country. You have an idea of what the train system should look like. A group member has a different idea. How do you go about compromising?
- You want to be the presenter when explaining the poster to the class. Your group votes for someone else to do it, as they are an excellent speaker. How would you compromise?

Assessment

Teacher observation, group discussion, student understanding

Credit

DPM East ELP/SLP curriculum

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Team tag

Connection to Character Traits

Team Building – can be applicable to all character traits depending on which traits a student chooses to work on.

Grade Level

K-4

Overview

Students communicate, collaborate, and commit to their team and to the teams' strategy. A team's desire for hard work and unselfishness makes for their success.

Materials

Jerseys of different colors

Procedures

Pre-activities

Students will receive instruction on basic locomotor and non-locomotor skills, such as safe "tag ups."

Activities

1. Warm-up.
2. Students will be divided into groups containing 4-5 students, depending on the size of the class. Jerseys will be distributed to teams, each team having its own color. Teacher will model appropriate language and group interactions needed in the team meeting phase of planning. The teacher will model sample strategies.
3. Students will meet in their teams for a predetermined period of seven minutes. They must decide on a team name and develop specific strategies.
4. Teams are then introduced by the teacher and cheered for by the other teams.
5. The object of the game is to tag members of any other jersey color. If opposite jerseys tag each other simultaneously, both are considered frozen and must sit on the floor. The tagged person sits down on the spot where he/she was tagged. He/she can tag any other jersey color from the seated position and may be "tagged up," or released from his/her "frozen" position by any other member of his/her team. The person who "tags up" a teammate must take his/her position on the floor. The strategy phase of the game is critical here in that a fatigued player may opt to put a fresh player back in action. It is the responsibility of the team to ensure that there is a constant rotation of players in action.
6. In the first few attempts at this game, the teacher will take responsibility for stopping the game to have the team members check for this rotation.

7. The game continues until one person is left standing. Teams then reform, analyze successful and unsuccessful strategies, and then go back on the floor for the second round.

8. Cool-down.

Assessment

Teacher observation, class discussion, student self-assessment

Credit

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3721>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

PRUI – IT

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork, Trust, Communication

Grade Level

All

Overview

The purpose of this game is to integrate group members and build trust and communication.

Materials

Blindfolds

Procedures

1. Pick a person to be the PRUI – IT discreetly.
2. Have each player take a blindfold and spread out on the floor.
3. Tap someone on the shoulder and let him/her know they are the PRUI – IT while the others have the blindfolds on.
4. The PRUI-IT will take off their blindfold.
5. Students will put up their arms as bumpers so no one will get hurt.
6. They will walk around in a designated area and when they touch someone they ask, “Are you the PRUIT?” If the person does not answer back, they are the PRUI.
7. The blindfolded student will take off his/her blindfold and become part of the PRUI by locking arms.
8. This continues until the class has joined together using teamwork and become part of the chain.

Assessment

Group discussion for understanding of teamwork

Credit

www.Canadaonline.about.com

Lesson: Teamwork

Title

Yeah Teamwork! Brainstorm and Hula-Hoop Relay

Connection to Character Traits

Teamwork and cooperation

Grade level

All

Overview

To help students be able to recognize teamwork and to provide students with the opportunity to practice using teamwork.

By the end of this lesson, students will identify words that are associated with teamwork, practice teamwork with a cooperative game, and identify ways in which teamwork can help make our classroom a more peaceful place.

Materials

Large newsprint or chalkboard (enough for one brainstorm)

Crayons or markers

Hula-hoop

Procedure

Key Vocabulary Words

* Teamwork: Working cooperatively to achieve a common goal.

* Cooperation: to work together for a common purpose

1. Brainstorm: What is Teamwork? (10 minutes)

Goal: Students will brainstorm about the word teamwork to define the word and identify when and where it happens.

a. Tell students that you are going to begin today's activities by brainstorming about the word teamwork.

b. Write the word "teamwork" up on the board or newsprint.

c. Ask students if they know what the word teamwork means. Here are some suggested questions to help guide the brainstorm:

- * What does teamwork mean?
- * Why do we need teamwork? (How does teamwork help us?)
- * Where does teamwork happen?
- * Do we always need teamwork? (Difference between individual and team activities)
- * Do you have to be friends with someone to be able to work well on the same team with them?
- * How can we tell that teamwork is happening?
- * What words do you think of when you think of teamwork?
- * How can we make teamwork happen?
- * What skills do people need to make teamwork happen?

- d. Student responses should include actions such as listening, helping other people, working together, etc.
- e. When students run out of thoughts, provide them with the definition of teamwork: Working cooperatively to achieve a common goal.
- f. End this activity with praise for getting so many great ideas out on the paper. Tell students that you are impressed with how much they know about teamwork.

Closing Lesson (20 minutes)

1. Cooperative Game: Hula Hoop Relay (10 minutes)

Goal: For students to demonstrate their teamwork skills by playing a cooperative game

- a. Tell students that you are going to play a game, the Hula Hoop Relay, to practice using teamwork.
- b. Ask students to come join you in a circle. (Make sure you are in a large enough space.) Tell students that you want them to be standing and to hold hands.
- c. Explain to students that the goal of this activity is to get the Hula Hoop all the way around the circle, without letting go of each other's hands. Tell students that you want to hear them use encouraging words to help their classmates. Explain that you are trying to get the Hula Hoop around the circle as fast as possible.
- d. Ask students if they have any questions. If not, you can begin to play. Remind students that there are two rules:

- * Their circle must not break (students must always be holding hands) or else they need to start from the beginning

- * A Peace Games teacher will always start with the Hula Hoop

- e. Time how long it takes the class to get the Hula Hoop around the circle. Play a few rounds continually trying to beat your best time. If you want to add another challenge, insert another Hula Hoop into the mix going in the opposite direction.
- f. When finished, ask students to return to their seats.
- g. Quickly debrief the activity with them. Here are some suggested questions:

- * Did you like this game? Why?
- * What was difficult about this game?
- * Why do you think we were able to better our time?
- * What teamwork skills did we use?

Assessment

Based on group discussion (brainstorm). Assessment for the Hula Hoop relay is based on cooperation and time it takes to get hula-hoop around the circle.

Credit

The Power of Peacemakers

Lesson: Teamwork

Title

Squiggles

Connection to Character Traits

Teamwork and cooperation

Grade level

All

Overview

To help students be able to recognize teamwork and to provide students with the opportunity to practice using teamwork.

By the end of this lesson, students will identify words that are associated with teamwork, demonstrate understanding of teamwork through a cooperative activity, and identify ways in which teamwork can help make our classroom a more peaceful place.

Materials

A large sheet of paper (18" x 24" or larger) with a large squiggle drawn on it (you will need one for each small group)

Crayons or markers

Procedure

Key Vocabulary Words

* Teamwork: Working cooperatively to achieve a common goal.

* Cooperation: to work together for a common purpose

2. Squiggles (20 minutes)

Goal: Students will work together to create a picture based on a squiggle to demonstrate teamwork

- a. Tell students that you are now going to do an art project to practice working together as a team.
- b. Hold up one of the large pieces of paper to show students. Point out the squiggle on the sheet. Tell students that in small groups they are going to work together to make a picture out of the squiggle.
- c. Show students the model you brought to class with you (optional). Point out where your original squiggle was on the picture and explain how you and the other teachers made it into the final picture.
- d. Tell students that in their small groups they will decide what their squiggle is going to become and then make it into the picture.
- e. Explain to students that you expect them to use all of their teamwork skills during this activity.
- f. Divide students into small groups. Send the groups to different areas of the room.

Teaching Tip

When handing out crayons for Squiggles, one idea is to go in with the student's name on an individual crayon. This will help prevent problems concerning colors of crayons.

Intervene in this process as little as possible. Ask the group questions to prompt teamwork but try not to give suggestions.

g. Pass out a squiggle sheet to each group. Tell them that you want them to brainstorm ideas, decide on one, and tell the teacher what they have decided. Explain that they will get crayons and markers to draw and color with once they have told the teacher what picture their squiggle is going to become.

h. If groups are stuck for ideas, tell them to turn the paper around to prompt more suggestions.

i. Remind groups that everyone's ideas are important and should be heard. Remind them that is what teamwork is all about.

j. Once the group has decided on what the squiggle should become, give each student a different color of crayon. (In order to keep this from getting messy, you probably should not let them trade colors or have them pick out of a hat).

k. Tell students there are three rules for the drawing of the picture.

- * Each person can only draw with his/her color crayon.
- * All of the colors need to be used on the drawing.
- * Teamwork must be used.

l. As the group decides on what colors should go where and how the drawing should look, help them to use teamwork to make sure that everyone is participating.

m. Once the group has the picture the way they want it, ask all of the students to put their names on the bottom.

n. When all groups are finished, have students return to their seats. Debrief the activity with them. Here are some suggested questions:

- * Did you like this activity? Why or Why not?
- * How did your group decide what picture to draw?
- * How did you work out drawing and coloring your picture?
- * Did teamwork happen in your group? How did you know?
- * Do you think peacemakers use teamwork?

o. When finished, congratulate the class for their efforts.

Assessment

Based on discussion

Credit

"Squiggles" adapted from Elementary Perspectives by William Kriedler.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

The Group Needs Me Because...

Connections to Character Traits:

This is an exercise in personal commitment and self-worth. It can be applicable to all character traits, but fits with teamwork as it supports the student in examining what they bring to the team.

Grade Level

This lesson is appropriate for students in grades first through eighth.

Overview

Co-operative energizer. This exercise brings out humor and competitiveness, together with team spirit.

Materials

Directions, butcher block paper/wipe off board, paper and writing utensil for each person on team.

Procedures

1. Give participants five minutes to write down three reasons why they believe that the class/school/group needs them.
2. In a circle, ask each individual to present his/her reasons.
3. On a piece of butcher-block paper, have a "recorder" write down each person's reasons.
4. When all individuals have shared, direct the group to look at the paper and at how everyone's individual talents lead to collective group strength.
5. If possible, post in the classroom for all to see.

Processing Questions

1. How did this activity make you feel?
2. Were you surprised at the response you received from the group?
3. Was it difficult to think of 10 things that the group had in common?
4. Did you get stuck? If so, how did you work through it?
5. What did you learn about the group/class that you did not know?

Assessment

Group discussion, student reflection, and teacher observation

Source

Adapted from Team Building packet from a KTI class.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Electricity

Connections to Character Traits

This activity promotes teamwork and self-control.

Grade Level

5th–8th grade.

Overview

Participants work together towards a common goal by exercising self-control and by being aware of one's surroundings. This activity will take about 10–15 minutes depending on the number of participants.

Materials

A coin and a water bottle (preferably a larger bottle such as a Nalgene® bottle)

Procedure

1. Divide participants into two even lines. Groups must be even for this activity to work! Have the lines sit parallel to each other – approximately two to three feet apart.
2. Place the water bottle on the floor directly between the last players in each line.
3. Ask all participants to take their right hand and reach behind to hold the hand of the person sitting directly behind them.
4. Direct all participants except the first person in each line to close their eyes.
5. Explain that a coin will be flipped at the front of the line. Only the first person in line for each time will be able to see whether it is heads or tails.
6. If the coin lands on HEADS, the first person will squeeze the hand of the person behind them and so on. This “electric pulse” should make its way through each person to the very end. When the very last person feels their hand being squeezed, they will grab the water bottle in the middle. The first person to grab the water bottle wins a point for their team.
7. The team that wins the water bottle will get to switch places. The last person in the line will get up and move to be the very first person. Everyone else will scoot down one space. The team that did not get the water bottle will stay as it was.
8. If the coin lands on TAILS, no one should squeeze the person's hand behind them. If a hand is accidentally squeezed, the impulse will carry down the line until the last person grabs the water bottle. The other team will get to advance one place in this case.
9. The first team to get everyone through the line wins.

Processing Questions

1. Which position in the line was the most difficult?
2. Did keeping your eyes closed make this activity more challenging? If so, how?
3. Once you sent the impulse, could you take it back?
4. How can you relate this activity to spreading rumors or gossip?

Assessment

Observation and discussion-based

Credit

Adapted from a Deer Path Middle School Peer Mediation training done at CROYA led by Todd Nahigian.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Spontaneous Jump

Connections to Character Traits

This activity helps promote teamwork and the challenge and benefit of working together. Communication is essential in this activity yet challenged because talking is not allowed.

Grade Level

This lesson is appropriate for students in grades sixth through eighth grade.

Overview

Presenting participants with a challenge that they can only overcome by working together creates group unity. This activity takes about 5–10 minutes.

Materials

None

Procedure

1. Have participants stand in a general area.
2. Explain that the challenge is for everyone in the group to jump and land in unison.
3. Talking is not allowed in this challenge.
4. If the participants are struggling after a few minutes, remind them that they can use gestures.

Assessment

Students jump in unison without talking.

Credit

Adapted from a Deer Path Middle School Peer Mediation training done at CROYA led by Todd Nahigian.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Pass Right–Pass Left

Connections to Character Traits

This activity helps promote teamwork, active listening and communication.

Grade Level

7th–8th

Overview

Participants practice active listening. This activity takes about 10 minutes plus discussion time.

Materials

The Wright Family Story (attached)

A pipe cleaner/stick/tongue depressor for each person in the group

Procedure

Have your entire group form a circle. The best format is to have them seated on the floor sitting with their legs crossed. If this will not work with your group, you can have them in chairs or even standing in a circle. Give each person in the circle a pipe cleaner or some other item that can be passed easily from hand to hand. Tell the group that you are going to read them a story and that every time they hear any word that sounds like RIGHT or LEFT, they are to pass the pipe cleaner in their hand to the person on their right or left depending on what they heard. Start reading the story slowly so that they have a change to catch on to what you want them to do. After a few passes stop the story and ask them how they are doing. Check to see that everyone has a button in his or her hand. If your group is typical, some will have two or three pipe cleaners and others will not have any. Have them redistribute the buttons so that everyone has one again. Now continue to read the story, getting faster as you go. Stop the story a couple of more times to check on how they are doing.

Life with the Wright Family

One day the Wright family decided to take a vacation. The first thing they had to decide was who would be left at home since there was not enough room in the Wright family car for all of them. Mr. Wright decided that Aunt Linda Wright would be the one left at home. Of course this made Aunt Linda Wright so mad that she left the house immediately yelling, “It will be a right cold day before I return!”

The Wright family now bundled up with children, Tommy Wright, Susan Wright, Timmy Wright and Shelly Wright and got in the car and left. Unfortunately, as they turned out of the driveway someone had left a trashcan in the street so they had to turn right around and stop the car. They told Tommy Wright to get out of the car and move the trash can so they could get going. Tommy took so long that they almost left him in the street. Once the Wright family got on the

road, Mother Wright wondered if she had left the stove on. Father Wright told her not to worry he had checked the stove and had not left it on. As they turned right at the corner, everyone started to think about other things that they might have left undone.

No need to worry now, they were off on a right fine vacation. When they arrived at the gas station, Father Wright put gas in the car and then discovered that he had left his wallet at home. So Timmy Wright ran home to get the money that was left behind. After Timmy had left, Susan Wright started to feel sick. She left the car saying that she had to throw up. This of course got Mother Wright's attention and she left the car in a hurry. Shelly Wright wanted to watch Susan get sick, so she left the car too. Father Wright was left with Tommy Wright who was playing a game in the backseat.

With all of this going on Father Wright decided that this was not the right time to take a vacation, so he gathered up all of the family and left the gas station as quickly as he could. When he arrived home, he turned left into the driveway and said "I wish the Wright family had never left the house today!"

Processing Questions

1. What was happening during this activity?
2. What made the activity difficult to accomplish?
3. What impact did what other people do have on your ability to stay up with the story?
4. How did you feel during the activity?
5. What would have made the activity easier to accomplish?
6. How hard was it to listen and pass the objects at the same time?
7. How much of the story can you remember?
8. How seriously did everyone take the activity?
9. What impact did the level of seriousness have on the activity?
10. What can this activity tell us about communication?
11. How hard were you concentrating during the activity?
12. How hard were the people concentrating on either side of you?
13. How does this level of concentration compare with what you do when someone is talking to you?
14. Describe a situation you have had where someone was not really listening to you when you were telling him or her something?
15. How did it make you feel?

Assessment

Based on discussion questions.

Credit

Activities that Teach by Tom Jackson. Red Rock Publishing: Copyright 1993,
Page 1

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

What's In a Name?

Connections to Character Traits

This activity can be tied into respecting each other and showing courtesy to all the individuals in our community. It is also an essential precursor for team building.

Grade Level

K-5

Overview

Names are a very important part of who we are. Calling others by their names shows you are courteous and respectful and that you care.

Materials

Markers, art paper, pictures

Procedures

Discussion generators:

1. What do you like about your name? Are you named for someone special?
2. Why aren't children usually allowed to call adults by their first names only? When is it appropriate to call adults by their first names only?
3. Name some occasions when it might be especially important to remember someone's name, e.g., when you visit someone's home for the first time, when you meet new classmates, when you visit the doctor, when you work in a team at school, etc. Explain why remembering names on these occasions are important.
4. What are the differences between courtesy, respect, and caring?
5. Besides calling people by name, how can you show people that you respect them?

Activities:

K-1

- Read *Chrysanthemum*, by Kevin Henkes. Discuss the thoughts of Chrysanthemum. Ask the students if they agree or disagree with her decision at the end of the story. What else could she have done?
- Nametags help people who don't know us use our names easily. Help students design a nametag to be used for your next field trip or for the next time there is a visitor in your class.
- In bold marker write each child's name across the length of a 9" x 18" art paper. Have the students draw and collage pictures and write words that represent their likes, dislikes, values, and traits around their names. Display the artwork in the room and use it to help everyone read each other's names.

Grades 3–5

- Ask students to create a collage showing how their names reflect who they are and their own unique values. Ask them to include whatever character traits or positive qualities they possess.
- Share the essay, “My Name” from the book *House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros. Discuss what she thinks about her name and why. Notice that her name, Esperanza, means *hope* in Spanish. Have the children write their own name essays. What are their thoughts about their names; where did their names come from; and if they could have, what world they have named themselves and why?

Grades 2–3

- Share the book *My Name Is Maria Isabel*, by Alma Flor Ada. Discuss the reasons the teacher “changed” Maria’s name. What suggestion could you give the teacher? What could you suggest to Maria Isabel? If you had been a member of the class, what would you have done? Ask students to write a journal entry as if they had been in Maria Isabel’s class. Have them write their thoughts as if they were members of the class. Have students write a letter to the teacher giving their suggestions. Be sure to include how Maria Isabel felt and what she thought about her name.

Grades 1–5

- Have available “name books.” These books explain the origins and/or meanings of names. Have the students find the “definitions” of their own names. Using chart paper, display *Our Class’s Dictionary of Names*. Have students figure out the alphabetical arrangement of the pages, and have each student add his or her name and its definition to the page.

Assessment

Final product. Class discussion.

Credit

Lesson, discussion generators, and activities taken from Project Wisdom “What’s in a Name?” lesson.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

A “Fan” of Validation

Connections to Character Traits

This activity can be used to show respect for each other and feeling safe and valued within your learning environment. May be used as a team building activity.

Grade Level

Grades 2–6

Overview

Students validate one another by sharing appreciative comments.

Materials

Construction paper

Markers

Procedures

In this activity students validate one another by sharing appreciative comments.

- Give each student a piece of paper. Have students make a fan by folding the paper back and forth into seven equal sections. Once fans are folded, have students write their names on the top section, unfold their fan, and pass it to a classmate.
- The classmate writes something he or she really appreciates about the student in the section immediately below the student’s name, folds the section under so the comment is hidden, and passes the fan to another student.
- Students pass the fans until each section has a positive statement. When completed, fans are returned to the student whose name is at the top.

As students read the statement from their classmates, they realize how many “fans” they have on their team!

Assessment

Observation of how students functioned in the group as they were writing on each other’s fans. Group discussion.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Be Proud of Our School

Connection to Character Traits

To introduce a feeling of pride in our school which requires team building.

Grade Level

Grades 5–8

Overview

Students need to be aware that a feeling of pride in their school can bring about a sense of community and teamwork.

Materials

Board

Marker

What Can Make Us Proud worksheet

Procedures

1. Review the keys to working well together.
2. Explain that there are many things that middle school students have reported they are proud of about their school. Pass out the “What can make the Braves?” sheet. Explain that this sheet is a list of things that middle school students have reported that make them proud. Ask the students to rate one through five of things about which they could be proud.
3. Have the students split up into groups of three to six people.
4. Ask the students to share their rating to the group and have a recorder write it down. The recorder should compile the group’s ratings.
5. Ask the reporters to share the group’s top five objects of pride to the class. Write the results on the board.
6. Ask the student to discuss what they need to do to help make our school a place deserving of pride.
7. Ask the students to write down and share top five ideas.
8. Put results on board.
9. Ask the students to write down what adults in the building need to do to help make school a place deserving of pride.
10. Ask the students to share their answers to the group and have a recorder write it down.
11. Write results on board.
12. Review the things that make students proud of our school and things students and adults can do to make our school proud.

Assessment

Discuss as a group the topic of feeling pride in our school.

What Can Make Us Proud?

This is the list of what makes students the most proud of their school.
Rate one through five the things that would make you most proud of your school.

- _____Good after-school programs
- _____Students learn a lot
- _____Good teachers
- _____Most students are nice to each other
- _____Sports teams
- _____Band/Orchestra/Chorus
- _____Good friends at school
- _____Good video production
- _____Theatre Group/Plays
- _____Good activities like Field Day and field trips
- _____Helpful students
- _____Adults in the school care about students
- _____Students follow rules
- _____Other
- _____Other
- _____Other

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Personal Virtues Shield

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork/ Building a Classroom Community/
Getting to Know Each Other

Grade Level

All

Overview

Students create a shield that represents who they are. These can be hung and shared with the class.

Materials

Paper
Pencils
Colored pencils/crayons/markers
Construction paper

Procedures

See Personal Virtues Shield worksheet

Assessment

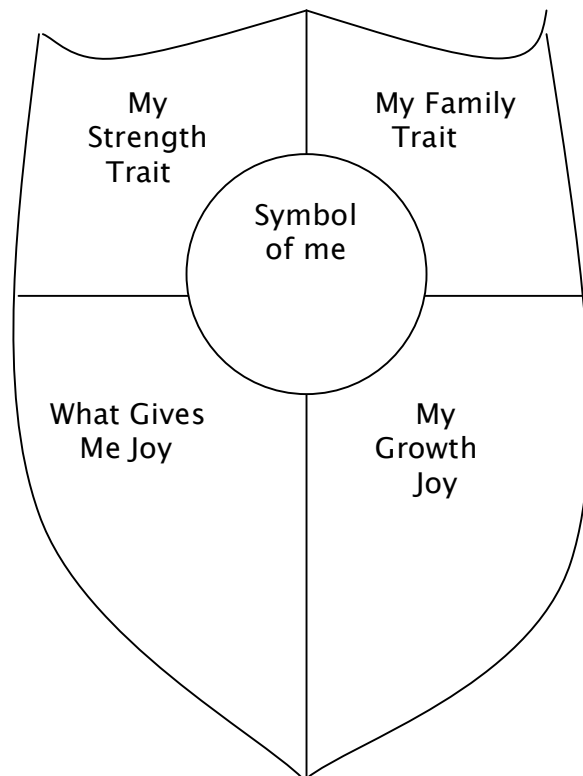
Students should share the character traits that they value. An extension could be to create a shield for the entire class.

Source

Linda Kavelin, Popov. The Virtues Project

Personal Virtues Shield

1. In the upper left quadrant, write the name of a strong character trait, one in which you have excellence, one of your best. Then draw a symbol or picture to represent this trait.
2. In the upper right quadrant, write a trait in which your family shows excellence and draw a symbol or picture for it.
3. In the lower left quadrant, write the trait, "Joy" and draw a symbol or picture of what gives you joy.
4. In the lower right quadrant, write a Growth Trait, one that is a challenge for you, one you need to grow and cultivate, and draw a symbol or picture for it.
5. In the center, draw a symbol that represents you. Example: If you love horses, draw a horse or a horseshoe.
6. Gather in a circle, and as a whole class, talk about your shield. Others in the circle give positive character trait acknowledgements to each person as he or she finishes sharing.



Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Big Buddies

Connection to Character Traits

Teamwork, Student Mentoring

Grade Level

K–1st and older grades (as big buddies)

Overview

When older children and younger children work together, older kids are empowered by being teachers and role models and younger children develop confidence from the attention. Student mentors or buddies read *The Gingerbread Boy* to their younger partners. After reading the book they work together to make a special treat or art project.

Materials

The Gingerbread Boy Book

Bread, gingerbread cookie cutter, peanut butter or jelly, raisins

Butcher paper, drawing and painting supplies, scissors

Procedures

Have older students read a folktale to younger students and then follow up with a fun activity that requires teamwork. A suggestion is:

Read “The Gingerbread Boy

Make: Eatable gingerbread Boys out of bread, cookie cutters, peanut butter or jelly (keep in mind food allergies) and raisins

Draw/Paint: Older students can trace younger students and turn them into life-size Gingerbread Kids using markers, crayons and paint

Assessment

Discuss: How it felt to be a teacher/role model. What did you learn from your older? Did you like having a buddy? What are some other things you can help your buddy with?

Take it Further: Younger students can write a Thank You note to their buddies.

Credit

Parents and Teachers, www.PBSKids.com

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

The Crayon Box that Talked

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork

Respect

Caring

Tolerance

Grade Level

PreK-K

Objective

Students will learn to be caring and respectful toward others despite differences.

Overview

“The Crayon Box that Talked” is a profound poem by Shane DeRolf that conveys the simple message that differences should not only be tolerated and accepted, but also embraced. The crayons soon learn that when we work together the outcome is much more beautiful, colorful and interesting.

Materials

- The Crayon Box that Talked by Shane DeRolf
- Pencils, paper, crayons
- Crayon Pattern
- Crayon Box Pattern

Procedure

Read and discuss “The Crayon Box that Talked.”

- Why didn’t the crayons get along? (Possible response: They were each so different from one another.)
- How did the crayons learn to get along? (Possible response: Learning to appreciate each ones’ special qualities.

Assessment

- Teacher will listen to the comments made about the children’s fellow classmates.
- Teacher will observe student behaviors toward fellow classmates.

Extensions and Adaptations

1. Class-Made Book entitled, “(Child’s Name) is Special”
(This may be done in conjunction with a Student of the Week/Day Program where each child will be honored.) As a class, discuss the designated child’s special qualities. Allow each classmate to illustrate the honored student. Under the illustration, the child may complete the following sentence: “_____ is special because...” Compile the illustrations into a class-made book that is presented to the honoree at the end of his/her special week.

2. Bulletin Board

Use patterns of a crayon, one per child, using various colors of rainbow, and a crayon box. Take a digital picture of each child and mount onto crayons. Display crayon spilling out of crayon box. Possible caption: "The Colors of Our Kindergarten"

Related Links and Resources

DeRolf, S. *The Crayon Box that Talked*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1997.

Credit

Sandra Fiorentino, Kindergarten teacher at Radix Elementary School, a 2007 National School of Character, wrote this lesson.

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Creating a Caring Culture: Appreciating the Diversity of Your School

Connections to Character Traits

Cooperation–Teamwork

Tolerance

Kindness

Grade Level

2–4

Overview

Students will recognize that our differences began at birth, recognize winning or losing is not what is most important, see mistakes as learning opportunities, understand the importance of helping each other.

Materials

Is There Really a Human Race? by Jamie Lee Curtis & Laura Cornell (illustrator), Joanna Cotler (2006)

Paper or tag board cutouts of a student (“paper dolls”)

Small items or pictures, which illustrate the students’ interests

Procedure

1. Introduce the book Is There Really a Human Race? Ask your students to predict what the book will be about. Have them “turn and talk” with their partner about what the title means to them (allow 2 minutes). Comment on what you heard one pair say to each other.
2. Begin the book and ask the students to look very carefully at the illustrations noticing all the differences in the appearances. Ask students to think about people they have seen in the mall or elsewhere. Do we start out differently at birth? How do we treat those who are different from us?
3. Stop and discuss the following pages of the book as you read. Is the race like a loop or an obstacle course? Talk to students about when things become difficult for them. Talk about the word “obstacle.” Ask students to “turn and talk” about a time when something was very hard for them and how they dealt with it. Did someone help them? Reflect on what you heard a partnership say. When I get off track. This page provides an opportunity to talk about choices. What do we do when we make mistakes? Do we learn from them? Take what’s inside of you and make big, bold choices. Talk about our responsibility to help our classmates, our school, the environment, and those less fortunate.
4. Culminating Activity: Create a template of an outline of child. Copy it on to

plain white paper, construction paper, or tag board. Cut it out or allow students to cut out their own “paper dolls.” Have students take home their paper dolls to dress and decorate, illustrating things they are good at or really enjoy doing. Encourage students to talk to their family about what they might put on their doll. Have students turn in the paper dolls so that they can be displayed in the classroom or hallway with the title “We’re a Team.”

Assessment

Observe student discussions and check for understanding. Evaluate paper dolls for completion and effort.

Credit

Sandra Banks, intervention specialist and teacher at Cross Bayou Elementary.

<http://www.character.org>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Group Cooperation

Connection to Character Traits

This activity allows students to build relationships, and appreciate the qualities that each person brings to the classroom.

Grade Level

1-6

Can be adapted to be used with upper middle grades

Overview

Students will create a spider web using a ball of yarn. Each time a piece of the web is made, one student will have to share something they like about another student.

Materials

A ball of thick white yarn

A group of ten children or more

Balloon (for extension only)

Procedures

1. The class will stand up and make a circle in the classroom.
2. One person will start with the ball of yarn. You will start spinning the web by having that person throw the remaining ball of yarn to another person. The person that threw the yarn has to share one thing they like about the person that caught the remaining ball of yarn. That person will then throw the remaining ball to another person in the circle.
3. This activity will continue until every person has caught the ball of yarn and a spider web has been created.
4. This activity can be repeated until the ball of yarn has been used up.

Extension

Once the web of yarn has gone to every person in the circle, place a blown up balloon in the center and try to keep it from touching the floor. Debrief by having a discussion about the skills, traits it took to keep work together on the task.

Assessment

Observe to make sure that each person is participating and using kind words when speaking of other people.

Credit

A to Z Teacher Stuff (Faine, Pre-Kindergarten teacher)

<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/pages/200.shtml>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Celebrating Diversity and Heritage

Connection to Character Traits

Respecting and appreciating diversity to work together as a team

Grade Level

Upper elementary, middle school

Overview

Learn about family heritage and celebrate diversity – Coordinates with Harcourt LA Theme 1

Materials

Paper, pencils, colored pencils/crayons/markers

Procedures

Day 1: Tie to previous information. Last time we talked about everyone's different intelligences and contributions to class. What other ways are we different? One difference is that we all have different family stories. Teacher tells his or her own family story—where parents are from, how they came to the U.S., how they came to Illinois. Students' homework is to go home and interview a family member about their own family story, finding out specific countries of origin, narratives, and symbols that represent their history.

Day 2: Students bring in their stories. Using the internet, look up flags from countries of origin. Students will make a heritage shield using symbols that represent their family, flags from their country/countries of origin, and a picture representing their story. Students will write out their family story in a narrative form. When class is finished, students will sit in a circle and share their heritage shields. Discuss similarities in stories: hardships, countries of origin, how families migrated here, etc.

Assessment

Students completed family interview, followed directions and shared information with the class

Credit

Mari Allen

<http://www.lessonplansage.com/SSLAOMDCCommunityUnit-CelebratingDiversityHeritageL36.htm>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

What Would You Do?

Connections to Character Traits

Responsibility, Making good choices

Grade Level

6–8

Overview

This lesson is designed to teach character development, problem solving, and teamwork. The students will learn that we all face tough decisions every day. How we choose to respond to these events reveals who we are and where we are in our character/moral development. This activity also helps young people to deal with peer pressure, problem solving, and to work within a small group. It uses situational events that force group too discuss acceptable solutions. (Optional use of [Tough Decisions: 50 Activities in Values and Character Education](#) by Ann Bourman to generate situational events)

Materials

- Pencil and paper
- Situational events that force group to discuss acceptable solutions. These can be teacher or student generated.

Procedures

Pre-activities

Students should know the definition of and have an understanding of “character.” They should be familiar with role-play. Teacher should precede this lesson with a discussion about life events that may cause us to struggle to make the right decisions.

Activities

1. Begin the lesson by reading the following scenario:
How Can Jenny Get Nicer Clothes for School?

Jenny is poor and wears worn-out clothes to school. Some students make fun of her. She feels so hurt by their remarks that she often stays home from school to avoid them.

One morning a teacher quietly takes her aside and asks her why she is absent from school so often. The teacher thinks she knows what the problem is. She is friendly and kind to Jenny. Jenny finally has a chance to tell someone the problem that has been bothering her. Perhaps there is a way to get help. On the other hand, she does not want to embarrass her family.

Should she tell the teacher the truth about her absences and her shabby clothes? Or should she make up some sort of excuse?

2. Give the students a few seconds to process the information. Then clarify any questions to make sure everyone understands this situation.

3. Thoughts and Questions: (Teacher's choice for oral discussion or requesting students to write answer on paper.)

- * Question 1: Is it right for the teacher to ask Jenny about something she suspects is a family problem? What value is the teacher showing if she does that?

- * Question 2: Should Jenny try to solve her problem by herself? If she does, what value will she be demonstrating? Or will she just be stubborn?

- * Question 3: Should people always try to solve problems all by themselves?

- * Question 4: Should people sometimes try to solve problems with help from others? When? What values are shown when you help your friends with their problems?

- * Question 5: What services does your own school have that might help a student like Jenny?

4. Role-playing: There are five characters needed for this scenario:

- * Jenny

- * The teacher who questions Jenny

- * One of Jenny's friends

- * A mean student that makes fun of Jenny

- * One of Jenny's parents

Select 5 students to role-play. The group can be given class time to practice or this can be impromptu.

5. Have the students write a letter to Jenny. Encourage them to put themselves in Jenny's place. What would you tell Jenny? What kind of help would you offer? How would you be a friend to Jenny? The letter can be handwritten or students can use a word processing application.

6. Ask the class if anyone has ideas for another topic to be discussed during another session on character development.

Assessment

Teacher observations or student reflection

Source

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/WilliamHovis523002557>

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3462>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Ultimate Frisbee

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork

Grade Level

4–8

Overview

Ultimate Frisbee is a game that can be played on a regular gym floor. Students will use a combination of passing and catching skills. Ultimate Frisbee is a good cardiovascular workout. Students will also be able to work on teamwork skills.

Materials

Frisbee

4 cones

Procedures

The goal is for one team to get the Frisbee past the goal line in order to score. The ideal number of players on a team is 5–7. If teams are too large, it will be too crowded. Use the out-of-bounds lines on both ends of the court for the goal lines.

1. The Frisbee is passed from teammate to teammate to advance the Frisbee up the court. Once a player catches the Frisbee, he or she cannot take any steps. The holder must throw the Frisbee from where he/she catches it.
2. If team A throws the Frisbee and nobody touches the Frisbee before it hits the ground, the Frisbee goes to team B. If team A throws the Frisbee and a member of team A touches it but does not catch it, the Frisbee goes to team B. If team A throws the Frisbee and a member of team B touches the Frisbee but does not catch it, then the Frisbee goes to team A. If team A throws it and team B intercepts it, team B gets the Frisbee. If the Frisbee hits the ground, it goes to the team that did not touch it last.
3. The Frisbee can be played off the wall, backboards, or ceiling. Defense can defend but may not touch the passer. The game is designed to be very fast-paced. Students should be moving at all times and play on both ends of the court.

Assessment

Let students play in an actual game. Look at their passing and catching skills. Students should also be able to keep the game moving without much delay.

Source

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/SusieShelton5232002038>

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3072>

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Icebergs

Connections to Character Traits

Appreciation of differences and similarities, respect

Grade Level

Any

Overview

Circle up. Center person chooses a trait, behavior, or experience. People who match swap places.

Materials Needed

Cheap paper plates, 1 per person

Procedures

Each participant gets a paper plate and stands in a circle, about a shoulder's width apart. Ask participants to put the plate on floor and stand on it.

You have now been transported to Antarctica and are standing on an iceberg!!! The good thing is you still get email. And you can use email to communicate with others and find about the people who are on the surrounding icebergs.



Here's the process:

Person in the middle says:

My name is _____ and (tell where you live, your school, or whatever characteristics are appropriate to the group) And I've got mail for anyone who _____

And then you fill in the blank with characteristics that might apply to this group — such

as: Went to Wisconsin Dells this summer... played a guitar last 6 months... Is wearing cowboy boots, etc.

If that characteristic applies to you – you have to leave your iceberg and find a new one, and it has to be at least 2 icebergs away!!!

Whoever doesn't make it to an iceberg, is in the center and gets to select the next category.

(Note: The person in the middle doesn't have to have the characteristic that they select.

That's the basic rules of the game, now is group decision time — do you want the basic version or the challenge version??? (Have the group vote by a show of hands. The option with the most votes wins. Or you can start out with the less complicated version and move to the challenge version if the group needs to have a change)

The Basic Version: Run anyway you can to get to an iceberg – but don't trip anyone or shove.

The Challenge Version: Do the penguin walk – knees together – short steps. This is helpful if you have a wide variety of ages, sizes or abilities. It also slows the group down if needed. If you do this, make your circle smaller.

Note: Groups that don't know each other very well will usually use physical characteristics – such as wearing tennis shoes, has blonde hair, is wearing purple, etc. for the categories which is very non threatening. Groups that really know each other may get too narrow and specific in focus, which could lead to embarrassing situations or not involve all the people in the group.

Monitor and add new challenges as needed. One way to make a change in the middle of the game is to say, "You now have an new internet service provider. Your new service only takes messages that apply to more than 2 people. Your message will "bounce back" as "undeliverable" if you send it. And you will have to "re-send" your message.

Assessment

Teacher observations or student reflection

Source

www.kansas4-h.org/resources/library

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Vacuum Cleaner Relay Race

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork

Grade Level

3–5

Overview

Use straws to transport paper

Goal – A piece of paper is picked up on the end of the straw. The paper is carried around to the goal and back. The paper is kept on end of straw by sucking on straw.

Materials

1 Drinking straw per person

One 4" x 4" piece of paper per team

Procedure

Divide group into teams and have them line up, single file, behind a table, or other type of starting point. Each person has a drinking straw.

The first person starts by “vacuuming up” the piece of paper on the end of their straw. (It’s helpful to put the paper on a table to start the relay and use the table to transfer the paper to the next person.) They go down to the goal line and come back. (About 10 feet is a good first time target.) They release the paper on tabletop. Next person uses their straw to “vacuum” up the paper. Continues until team is finished. If you drop the paper, you can’t use your hands to pick it back up. So you have to get down on your hands and knees to “vacuum” it up. Start again from where the paper was dropped. Teams can compete against each other or for their own “best time”

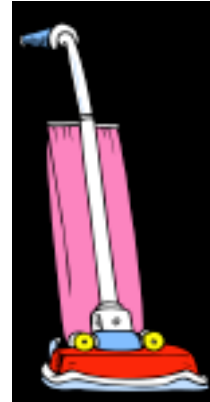
(Adapted from Games 2 for Youth Groups, The Ideas Library, c. 1997)

Assessment

Teacher observations or student reflection

Source

www.kansas4-h.org/resources/library



Lesson Plan–Teamwork

Title

Bully Prevention

Connection to Character Traits

This lesson can be applicable to all character traits.

Grade Level

Grades 3–8

Overview

Before beginning, students should be aware of the term, “bully”, and the expression, “fooling around”. Students will explore these terms and report back and discuss their behavioral observations related to these terms.

Materials

Bullying worksheet

Procedures

Day 1: Have students answer and share their responses to #1–4 on the worksheet that correlates with this lesson, as the teacher leads the discussion.

Day 2: Place the students in cooperative groups and allow them time to choose a bully situation to act out along with a resolution. The teacher can determine the time needed to practice. (The teacher should also rotate and listen in on students’ role-playing to prevent hurtful comments during presentations.) After practicing, students will then role-play for the class a bullying behavior and an effective way to manage the situation.

Day 3: Have the students share the bullying situations they observed during their lunch and recess and brainstorm ways to manage the situations or discuss how the situations were managed.

TEACHER TIME: Type up a small packet from the students’ ideas to prevent bullying and pass out to class.

Assessment

Based on discussion and observations students identify.

Extensions and Adaptations

Language Arts: Students can remain in their cooperative groups, or be placed within their guided reading groups to develop a play that would include the moral of “bullying is unacceptable behavior” (it is not caring or respectful). Students could then write a script and have children formally act out a play or write a story (using the same moral) and use descriptive pictures. Assign parts within the groups to allow for fair and equal participation on all students.

Social Studies: Have students study the way immigrants were treated when they first arrived in America. Allow them to describe a bullying situation and then

think of proper ways to have handled these situations. This lesson can also be related to the treatment Native Americans with the arrival of Europeans, the treatment of African Americans, etc.

Credit

Karen Gallagher, a staff member at Radix Elementary School, a 2007 National School of Character, wrote this lesson.

Bully Prevention Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. What do you think a bully is?

2. What do you think the difference is between being a bully and just fooling around?

3. Circle the items that you consider bullying:
 - a. Making fun of the way somebody looks
 - b. Chasing away younger kids when they want to play on the swings
 - c. Accidentally bumping into someone in the hall
 - d. Calling people names because of the color of their skin
 - e. Making other kids play a game your way
 - f. Teasing someone about the clothes he/she wears
 - g. Telling someone that the hat he/she is wearing doesn't look good
 - h. A group of kids won't ever let you sit with them at lunch even though there's room
 - i. Telling someone that he/she is not being nice
 - j. Joking with people by "putting them down"

4. What do you think can be done to stop bullying?

5. Using one of the bullying situations listed from a-j, role-play to act out effective ways to handle the situation.

What letter are you acting out? _____

What are two ways to resolve the situation?

ATTENTION: INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS

Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to observe, record, and tabulate how many different situations, or dialogues, or actions demonstrated bullying behaviors during recess or lunch. We will have you report your findings tomorrow.

HOMEWORK:

Brainstorm two ideas to prevent the bullying behavior you observed at your school.

1. _____

2. _____

Lesson Plan–Teamwork

Title

Collaborate

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork, collaboration, patience

Grade Level

This lesson is most appropriate for students in grades K–1.

Overview

During this lesson, students will work together to complete one of two tasks. You have your choice of creating a mural or completing a puzzle. After the activity, students have the opportunity to discuss how they worked together.

Materials

You may want to watch “*Play and Learn with Arthur, Volume 1*” a PBS video

Crayons, markers, or paint

Puzzles with 6 or 8 pieces

Two large pieces of paper

Procedures

1. Puzzle Pieces: Choose a puzzle and divide the pieces among you and your children. Work together as a team to complete the puzzle.

2. Mutual Mural: Decide on a theme with your children. Spread a large strip of paper on the floor or tape it to the wall. Work together as a team to create a piece of mutual artwork based on your chosen theme. Encourage children to share ideas.

Talk About It

Discuss teamwork with your children. Explore specific ways you worked together to complete the puzzle and create the mural.

With a Group

Each of these activities can be done with groups of children by giving each group its own puzzle and by having each group vote on a theme for its mural. After each activity, groups can share how they worked together to get the task done.

Based on an activity in *Play and Learn with Arthur, Volume 1*

Assessment

Use student reflections during discussion to assess their understanding of teamwork.

Source

<http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/acts/collaborate.html?cat=development>

Lesson Plan–Teamwork

Title

Cooperate

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork, cooperation, patience

Grade Level

This lesson is most appropriate for students in grades K–1.

Overview

During this lesson, students will have the opportunity to play one of two cooperative games. You have your choice of Traveling Train or From Here to There. After the activity, students have to opportunity to discuss way they worked together.

Materials

You may want to watch “*Play and Learn with Arthur, Volume 1*” a PBS video
Drum

Hoops (mats, rug squares, or other materials can be used)

Procedures

1. Traveling Train: Have each child hold on to the waist of the person in front of them, forming a train. Beat a drum to set various train speeds. Have the train move forward slowly, then faster. Stop the train, then have it slowly back up. The goal is for the train to stay in one piece and avoid crashes.

2. From Here to There: Give children hoops. (Mats, rug squares, or other materials can also be used.) Have kids work together to try and make it across the room without stepping on the floor (i.e. they may step only inside the hoops). Give them time to figure out that the solution is to lay down the hoops and have people standing in all but the first one. Then they pick up and pass along the first (empty) hoop, put it in front, and repeat this procedure until they reach the end of the room.

With a Group

These games are great with a group of children. 'From Here to There' works particularly well with teams. Invite some friends over to play!

Based on an activity in Play and Learn with Arthur, Volume 1

Assessment

Use student reflections during discussion to assess their understanding of teamwork.

Source

<http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/acts/cooperate.html?cat=development>

Lesson Plan–Teamwork

Title

Team Efforts

Connections to Character Traits

Cooperation, patience

Grade Level

This lesson is most appropriate for students in grades K–1.

Overview

During this lesson, students will have the opportunity to play one of three cooperative games. You have your choice of Blindfold Game, Scratch My Back or Picnic Blanket. After the activity, students have to opportunity to discuss way they worked together.

Materials

You may want to watch “*Play and Learn with Arthur, Volume 2*” a PBS video.

Blankets

Chair

Masking tape

Scarf (or material for a blindfold)

Procedures

1. Blindfold Game: Moles are blind, and use their noses to get around. In this game, one child is the mole and wears a blindfold. This mole has a poor sense of smell, and can't find the way back to the molehill (represented by a chair in the middle of the room). Have the mole try to find the chair and sit down without help. Then you or another partner can help guide the child to sit on the chair. (Make sure the room is clear of obstacles.)

2. Scratch My Back: In this game, children play bears in Honey Hollow. These bears have an itch (represented by a piece of masking tape) right in the center of their backs. Have children try to remove the masking tape by themselves. Then, have them work with a partner to "scratch" the itch.

3. Picnic Blanket: In this game, children play rabbits having a lovely picnic at the seaside. When it's time to go home, everything needs to be packed up. Have the rabbits work alone and then in pairs to fold the picnic blankets.

Talk About It

Discuss teamwork with your children. Explore everyday tasks that might be made easier by working in pairs or as a team.

With a Group

Ants in a Line: Children pretend to be ants in this game. The ants must move the pebbles (balls) blocking their anthill from one area of the room to another.

First, have each child try to move all the balls in one trip. Then have children work together by lining up and passing the pebbles from ant to ant.

Based on an activity in Play and Learn with Arthur, Volume 2

Assessment

Use student reflections during discussion to assess their understanding of teamwork.

Source

http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/acts/team_efforts.html?cat=development

Lesson Plan: Teamwork

Title

Teamwork and Tangrams

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork, cooperation, patience

Grade Level

This lesson is most appropriate for students in grades 3–8.

Overview

This lesson provides students with the opportunity to learn how to work as a team to accomplish a common goal. Students will work in small groups to arrange tangrams in certain shapes. Each member of the group fulfills a certain role. Class discussion and reflection time are included in the plan.

Materials

Set of Tangram pieces for each group of students

Writing materials for reflections and self-assessment

Procedures

Lesson Driving Questions: What are my strengths for working in groups, and how can I contribute to solving conflicts that arise during group work?

Begin a class discussion that focuses on constructive versus obstructive behaviors. Ask students to describe examples of each.

Inform students that they will be working in a group to solve a Tangram problem and will later reflect on behaviors that assisted or hampered completion of the task. Using an overhead projector and transparent colored Tangram shapes, demonstrate, with student input, how to arrange Tangram pieces into different shapes, beginning with a simple shape.

Divide students into small groups. Assign each student a number and a corresponding role. Roles should include:

- *Go-Getter: Has permission to leave the group to pick up materials
- *Timekeeper: Keeps track of how much time remains for the group to solve the problem
- *Quality Inspector: reminds the group of its task should the group stray from its assignment.
- *Encourager: Encourages all members to participate and gives positive feedback to group members.

Make sure each student understands his or her role and remind students that during the activity, you will not answer questions. This will require students to practice cooperative skills.

Group Activity

The first task of each group is to arrange the Tangram pieces into a square shape. Then, groups reproduce a second design using the Tangram pieces. Allow groups fifteen minutes to complete the two tasks.

If they finish before time is up, students should begin listing the constructive and obstructive behaviors exhibited during the activity and then discuss them within their groups. Remind students of group expectations, such as: use soft voices, everyone participates, and so on.

Class Discussion

Ask students to partner with one group member to discuss briefly the strengths they brought to the team activity. Students should be identifying ways to improve their group skills. Then have students, in their groups, prepare to discuss the importance of cooperation, teamwork, and communication by posing some or all of the following questions:

- *What were some of the constructive behaviors that helped you to complete the Tangram task?
- *What were some of the obstructive behaviors that prevented you from completing the Tangram activity?
- *What were some of the frustrations you felt when obstructive behaviors were exhibited?
- *What are some choices you made in relation to frustrating behaviors?
- *What was the result of these choices?
- *What are your responsibilities as a group member?

To encourage all students to participate in the discussion, use the Numbered Heads Together strategy. To begin the discussion, pose a question and call out a number to respond to the question. Someone from each group should be prepared to respond. Call on one of those students to answer. Call a new number to follow up or clarify the answer, promoting discussion. Continue the discussion by calling new numbers to respond to questions.

Student Reflection in Learning Logs

Restate the Lesson Driving Questions: What are my strengths for working in groups and how can I contribute to solving conflicts that arise during group work?

Have students answer the driving question individually in their learning logs by writing one or two paragraphs.

Assessment

Use the reflection paragraphs to assess students' understanding of teamwork.

Source

http://www.teachervision.fen.com/group-work/lesson-plan/48534.html?for_printing=1

Lesson Plan–Teamwork

Title

Work Together– Lost and Found

Connections to Character Traits

Teamwork, cooperation, patience

Grade Level

This lesson is most appropriate for students in grades K–1.

Overview

This lesson provides students with the opportunity to learn about teamwork through a story in which Clifford and Emily Elizabeth find a lost toy. Further lessons related to this lesson provide the opportunity for students to work together to make a train. It provides students an opportunity to learn and practice social and emotional skills and language and literacy skills.

Materials

A copy of *Clifford's Busy Week* by Norman Bridwell

Procedures

When children learn how to successfully interact and share common goals with other children, they gain valuable social skills. Learning how to work with others comes most often from observation and personal experience.

Discuss the concept of working together and teamwork. Explain that when friends work together, good things can happen! Share feelings associated with losing a favorite toy. Encourage children to take turns relating their own experiences with losing something special. Show children the illustrations from *Clifford's Busy Week* by Norman Bridwell (Scholastic). Read and discuss. Check for comprehension by having children retell the story and identify characters. Finally, ask children to give this story a new title and talk about how Emily Elizabeth and Clifford worked as a team to find Clifford's lost toy, Squeaky.

Practice:

Teamwork Train!

Help children recognize basic geometric shapes found in a train by showing them pictures or drawing a model. Provide children with shape patterns, pencil, scissors, colored paper, and glue. Use rectangles for boxcars, circles for wheels, and a cylinder for the smokestack. After shapes are traced and cut, help children cooperatively build a train along a classroom wall or chalkboard. Have children sign and date their boxcars. Substitute children's names as you sing and clap to the old railroad tune *She'll (child's name) Be (will be) Coming Around the Mountain...when she/he comes!*

Extend: Working together to gather and record information can be a fun and valuable learning experience!

- * Help children create a “Lost and Found” journal by describing, drawing, and cataloging information about lost items in the classroom or school. Have children update the journal weekly and give a short report on new items lost and found.

- * Explore trains of yesterday and today to help children discover the history and importance of one of America’s oldest means of transportation.

Clifford’s Library: These books support Clifford’s Big Ideas and reinforce valuable early literacy skills:

- * Clifford’s Big Book of Stories by Norman Bridwell (Scholastic)
- * Shapes and Sizes (Clifford the Big Red Dog Workbook) by Dina Anastasio (Scholastic)

Assessment

Check for understanding of teamwork during discussion.

Source

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=499&print=2>

ICEBREAKERS 2000

Gary Hopkins

Education World

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www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson196.shtml

Opening-Day Letter

Write a letter to your students. In that letter, introduce yourself to students. Tell them about your hopes for the new school year and some of the fun things you'll be doing in class. In addition, tell students a few personal things about yourself; for example, your likes and dislikes, what you did over the summer, and your hobbies. Ask questions throughout the letter. You might ask what students like most about school, what they did during the summer, what their goals for the new school year are, or what they are really good at. In your letter, be sure to model the correct parts of a friendly letter! On the first day of school, display your letter on an overhead projector. Then pass each student a sheet of nice stationery. Have the students write return letters to you. In this letter, they will need to answer some of your questions and tell you about themselves. This is a great way to get to know each other in a personal way! Variation: Mail the letter to students before school starts, and enclose a sheet of stationery for kids to write you back.

Meg Basker, Harrison Elementary School, South Bend, Indiana

Stringing Conversation Together

Cut string or yarn into pieces of different lengths. Each piece should have a matching piece of the same length. There should be enough pieces so that each student will have one. Then give each student one piece of string, and challenge each student to find the other student who has a string of the same length. After students find their matches, they can take turns introducing themselves to one another. You can provide a list of questions to help students "break the ice," or students can come up with their own. You might extend the activity by having each student introduce his or her partner to the class.

Stacy Moore, Garrison Mill Elementary School, Marietta, Georgia

Animal Groups

On the first day of school, gather all the students from a grade level in a large common area. Give each student a slip of paper with the name of an animal on it. Then give students instructions for the activity: They must locate the other members of their animal group by imitating that animal's sound only. No talking is allowed. The students might hesitate initially, but that hesitation soon gives way to a cacophony of sound as the kids moo, snort, and giggle their way into groups. The end result is that students have found their way into their homerooms or advisory groups for the school year, and the initial barriers to good teamwork have already been broken.

Donna Morgan, Avery Middle School, Newland, North Carolina

A Tangled Web

Gather students in a circle sitting around you on the floor. Hold a large ball of yarn. Start by telling the students something about yourself. Then roll the ball of yarn to a student without letting go of the end of the yarn. The student who gets the ball of yarn tells his or her name and something good about himself or herself. Then the student rolls the yarn to somebody else, holding on to the strand of yarn. Soon students have created a giant web. After everyone has spoken, you and all the students stand up, continuing to hold the yarn. Start a discussion of how this activity relates to the idea of teamwork -- for example, the students need to work together and not let others down. To drive home your point about teamwork, have one student drop his or her strand of yarn; that will demonstrate to students how the web weakens if the class isn't working together.

Amy Henning, W. C. Petty School, Antioch, Illinois

Student Dictionary

Write five questions on the board. Questions might include the following:

- * What is your name?
- * Where were you born?
- * How many brothers or sisters do you have?
- * What are their names?
- * Do you have any pets?

Tell students to write those questions on a piece of paper and to add to that paper five more questions they could ask someone they don't know. Pair students, and have each student interview his or her partner and record the responses. Then have each student use the interview responses to write a "dictionary definition" of his or her partner to include in a Student Dictionary. You might model this activity by creating a sample dictionary definition about yourself. For example:

Reynolds, Kim. proper noun. 1. Born in Riverside, California. 2. No brothers or sisters.

Have students bring in small pictures of themselves to paste next to their entries in the Student Dictionary. Bind the definitions into a book, and display it at back-to-school night.

Kim Reynolds, Warwick Elementary School, Fremont, California

Classmate Scavenger Hunt

Provide each student with two index cards. Ask each student to write a brief description of his or her physical characteristics on one index card and his or her name on the other. Physical characteristics usually do not include clothing, but if you teach the primary grades, you might allow students to include clothing in their descriptions. Put all the physical characteristic index cards in a shoe box, mix them up, and distribute one card to each student, making sure that no student gets his or her own card. Give students ten minutes to search for the person who fits the description on the card they hold. There is no talking during this activity, but students can walk around the room. At the end of the activity, tell students to write on the card the name of the student who best matches the description. Then have students share their results. How many students guessed correctly?

Patricia McHugh, John W. Raper Elementary School, Cleveland, Ohio

Cooperative Musical Chairs

This activity is a takeoff on the familiar musical chairs game. Set up a circle of chairs with one less chair than the number of students in the class. Play music as the students circle around the chairs. When the music stops, the students must sit in a seat. Unlike the traditional game, the person without a seat is not out. Instead, someone must make room for that person. Then remove another seat and start the music again. The kids end up on one another's laps and sharing chairs! You can play this game outside, and you can end it whenever you wish. Afterward, stress the teamwork and cooperation the game took, and how students needed to accept one another to be successful. Reinforce that idea by repeating this game throughout the year.

Danielle Weston, Willard School, Sanford, Maine

Hands-On Activity

Have students begin this activity by listing at least 25 words that describe them and the things they like. No sentences allowed, just words! Then ask each student to use a dark pen to trace the pattern of his or her hand with the fingers spread apart. Provide another sheet of paper that the student can place on top of the tracing. Because the tracing was done with a dark pen, the outline should be visible on the sheet below. Direct students to use the outlines as guides and to write their words around it. Provide students a variety of different colored pencils or markers to use as they write. Then invite students to share their work with the class. They might cut out the hand outlines and mount them on construction paper so you can display the hands for open house. Challenge each parent to identify his or her child's hand.

Veronica Coker, Lanesville Elementary School, Lanesville, Indiana

Chain Gang

Begin by asking students "Who can do something really well?" After a brief discussion about some of the students' talents, pass out paper and ask students to write down five things they do well. Then provide each student with five different-colored paper strips. Have each student write different talents on separate paper strips, and then create a mini paper chain with the strips by linking the five talents together. As students complete their mini chains, use extra strips of paper to link the mini chains together to create one long class chain. Have students stand and hold the growing chain as you link the pieces together. Once the entire chain is constructed and linked, lead a discussion about what the chain demonstrates -- for example, all the students have talents; all the students have things they do well; together, the students have many talents; if they work together, classmates can accomplish anything; the class is stronger when students work together than when individual students work on their own. Hang the chain in the room as a constant reminder to students of the talents they possess and the benefits of teamwork.

Kimberlee Woodward, substitute teacher, Waterford, Michigan

Silhouette Collage

Stock up on old magazines. Your school librarian might have a discard pile you can draw from. Invite students to search through the magazines for pictures, words, or anything else that might be used to describe them. Then use an overhead projector or another source of bright light to create a silhouette of each student's profile; have each student sit in front of the light source as you or another student traces the outline of the silhouette on a sheet of 11- by 17-inch paper taped to the wall. Have students cut out their silhouettes, then fill them with a collage of pictures and words that express their identity. Then give each student an opportunity to share his or her silhouette with the group and talk about why he or she chose some of the elements in the collage. Post the silhouettes to create a sense of "our homeroom."

Kathy Juarez, Piner High School, Santa Rosa, California

Headlines

As part of the normal first-day routine, many teachers have each student fill out a card with such information as name, address, phone number, parents' names and work numbers, and so on. You can use such cards to gather other information too, such as school schedule, why the student signed up for the class, whether the student has a part-time job, and whether he or she has access to the Internet at home. As a final bit of information, ask the student to write a headline that best describes him or her! This headline might be a quote, a familiar expression, or anything else. When students finish filling out the cards, give a little quiz. Ask students to number a sheet of paper from 1 to __, depending on how many students are in the class. Then read aloud the headlines one at a time. Ask students to write the name of the person they think each headline best describes. Who got the highest score?

Bonus! It seems as if parents are contacted only if there is a problem with students. At the end of each grading period, use the home address information to send a postcard to a handful of parents to inform them about how well their child is doing. This might take a little time, but it is greatly appreciated!

Dawn Walters, White House High School, White House, Tennessee

Pop Quiz

Ahead of time, write a series of getting-to-know-you questions on slips of paper -- one question to a slip. You can repeat some of the questions. Then fold up the slips, and tuck each slip inside a different balloon. Blow up the balloons. Give each student a balloon, and let students take turns popping their balloons and answering the questions inside.

Contributor Unknown

Fact or Fib?

This is a good activity for determining your students' note-taking abilities. Tell students that you are going to share some information about yourself. They'll learn about some of your background, hobbies, and interests from the 60-second oral "biography" that you will present. Suggest that students take notes; as you speak, they should record what they think are the most important facts you share. When you finish your presentation, tell students that you are going to tell five things about yourself. Four of your statements should tell things that are true and that were part of your presentation; one of the five statements is a total fib. This activity is most fun if some of the true facts are some of the most surprising things about you and if the "fib" sounds like something that could very well be true. Tell students they may refer to their notes to tell which statement is the fib. Next, invite each student to create a biography and a list of five statements -- four facts and one fib -- about himself or herself. Then provide each student a chance to present the 60-second oral biography and to test the others' note-taking abilities by presenting his or her own "fact or fib quiz." You can have students do this part of the activity in small groups.

Mitzi Geffen

Circular Fact or Fib?

Here's a variation on the previous activity: Organize students into two groups of equal size. One group forms a circle equally spaced around the perimeter of the classroom. There will be quite a bit of space between students. The other group of students forms a circle inside the first circle; each student faces one of the students in the first group. Give the facing pairs of students two minutes to share their 60-second oral "biographies." While each student is talking, the partner takes notes. After each pair completes the activity, the students on the inside circle move clockwise to face the next student in the outer circle. Students in the outer circle remain stationary throughout the activity. When all students have had an opportunity to share their biographies with one another, ask students to take turns each sharing facts and fibs with the class. The other students refer to their notes or try to recall which fact is really a fib.

Contributor Unknown

People Poems

Have each child use the letters in his or her name to create an acrostic poem. For example, Bill could write

Big
Intelligent
Laughing
Loving.

Tell students they must include words that tell something about themselves -- for example, something they like to do or a personality or physical trait. Invite students to share their poems with the class. This activity is a fun one that enables you to learn how your students view themselves. Allow older students to use a dictionary or thesaurus. You might also vary the number of words for each letter, according to the students' grade levels.

Bill Laubenber

Another Poetic Introduction.

Ask students to use the form below to create poems that describe them.

Name _____
Title (of poem) _____
I will never _____,
I will never _____,
and I will never _____.
I will always _____.

This activity lends itself to being done at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the year. You and your students will have fun comparing their responses and seeing how the students and the responses have changed.

Contributor Unknown

Food for Thought

To get to know students and to help them get to know one another, have each student state his or her name and a favorite food that begins with the same first letter as the name. For example: "Hi, my name is Latrece, and I like liver." As each student introduces himself or herself, he or she must repeat the names and favorite foods of the students who came before. Watch out -- it gets tricky for the last person who has to recite all the names and foods!

Latrece Hughes

I Am NOT!

Here's a challenging activity that might help high school teachers learn about students' abilities to think critically. Send students into the school hallways or schoolyard, and ask each to find something that "is completely the opposite of yourself." Option: To widen the area to be explored, provide this activity as homework on the first night of school. When students bring their items back to class, ask each to describe why the item is not like him or her. You'll get a lot of flowers, of course, and students will describe how those flowers are fragrant or soft or otherwise unlike themselves. But you might also get some clever responses, such as the one from a young man who brought in the flip-top from a discarded can; he talked about its decaying outward appearance and its inability to serve a purpose without being manipulated by some other force (and how he was able to serve a purpose on his own).

Joy Ross

Personal Boxes

In this activity, each student selects a container of a reasonable size that represents some aspect of his or her personality or personal interests, such as a football helmet or a saucepan. Ask students to fill that object with other items that represent themselves -- for example, family photos, CDs, dirty socks, a ballet shoe -- and bring their containers back to school. Students can use the objects in the containers as props for three-minute presentations about themselves. The teacher who provided this idea suggests that you model the activity and encourage creativity by going first -- it's important for students to see you as human too! She included in her container a wooden spoon because she loves to cook, a jar of dirt because she loves to garden, her son's first cowboy boot, a poem she wrote, a rock from Italy because she loves to travel, and so on. You'll learn much about each student with this activity, and it will create a bond among students. As each student gives a presentation, you might write a brief thank-you note that mentions something specific about the presentation so that each student can take home a special note to share with parents. It might take a few days to give every student the opportunity to share.

Valerie Braun

Article by Gary Hopkins

Children's Book List: Teamwork

Nobody Knew What to Do by: Becky Ray McCain

A boy tries to figure out what to do when he repeatedly witnesses a classmate being bullied. The boy and his classmates band together to solve the problem.

I'm Not Gong to Chase the Cat Today by: J. Harper

One day the dog decides not to chase the cat, the cat decides no to chase the mouse, the mouse decides not to chase the lady, and they all have a party.

And to Think That We'd Never Be Friends by: M. Hoberman

A brother and sister learn that friendship is better than fighting and they soon spread the message all over the world.

Helping Out by: George Ancona

Explores the relationship between adults and children working together in many different ways.

Mr. Tall and Mr. Small by: A giraffe and a mouse who live together think that each is better than the other, until a fire threatens their home and they discover that their differences can be assets after all.

It Takes a Village by: Fletcher Cowen

A big sister tries to watch her little brother on market day and learns that the entire village is watching out for him as well.

Herman the Helper by: R. Krauss

Herman the helpful octopus is always willing to assist anyone who needs his help—old or young, friend or enemy

Swimmy by: L. Lionni

A little black fish in a school of red fish figures out a way to protect them all from their natural enemies.

The Little Red Hen Makes Pizza Retold by: Philemon Sturges

In this traditional tale, the duck, the dog and the cat refuse to help Little Red Hen make pizza, but do want to join I when it's time to eat.

Teamwork by: A. Morris

Discusses teamwork and how members working together as a group cooperate to get the job done.

Stone Soup by: Various retellers

When all the townspeople give just a little food, everyone enjoys a feast.

The Turnip by: Various retellers

A giant turnip can only be harvested when everyone pulls together.

I am Special by: A. Parsons

Examines the various ways of being an individual. Discusses, opinions, teamwork, friendship, competition and dealing with differences.

Elves and the Shoemaker: Various retellers

A pair of helpful elves brings prosperity to a kindly shoemaker and his wife.

Mrs. Rose's Garden by: E. Greenstein

When Mrs. Rose grows vegetables guaranteed to win all the blue ribbons at the fair, she is inspired to a generous act involving the gardens of her friends.

The Lion and The Mouse; Aesop

A mouse proves that even small creatures are capable of great deeds when he rescues the King of the Jungle

The Mousery by: C. Pomerantz

When four orphan mice seek shelter on a cold winter night, Sliver and Slice the bad tempered older mice finally learn to soften their hearts.

Old Turtle's Soccer Team by: Under an old turtle's guidance, the animals learn how to play soccer and the meaning of good sportsmanship.

Miss Tizzy by: Libba Moore Gray

The eccentric Miss Tizzy, a beloved friend to all the neighborhood children, needs their help when she is sick in bed.

Big Al and Shrimpy by: A. Clements

A big strong fish named Big Al who becomes injured during one day of their adventures together befriends a very small smart and lonely fish named Shrimpy. It is Shrimpy's big ideas and perseverance that builds the team that saves Big Al.

Lessons to Explore On-line

Title: Guide to Games and Activities with Balloons

Overview: These activities are designed for fun, team building, and experiential learning using balloons

Website: <http://wilderdom.com>

Title: Hang in There!

Overview: Perseverance is a hard concept to teach. This lesson uses real life stories of perseverance and hard work to drive home the point. Students are given the opportunity to reflect on their own lives and discuss examples of people who persevered.

Website:

http://charactereducation.info/resources/lesson_plans_example_lesson.htm

Title: It's Too Loud In Here! Teamwork in the Classroom

Overview: Students work on developing classroom rules. This will help students develop a framework for future social interactions activities.

Website: <http://www.readwritethink.org>

Title: Cooperative Learning or Positive Interdependence and Peer Discussions

Overview: Introduces some very simple structures that can be used to facilitate cooperation, peer relations, interpersonal skills, getting along with others and teambuilding.

Website:

http://charactered.ocde.us/ICE/lessons_html/cooperative.html

http://charactered.ocde.us/ICE/lessons_html/peer_discussions.html

Character Education/Social Emotional Learning and Bullying Websites

<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/>

Pacer Kids Against Bullying is a kid friendly website which includes stories, games and helpful hints for kids about bullying. There are also movies and situational stories to help kids identify with the victim as well as understand why bullying happens.

<http://www.mcgruff.org/Advice/bullies.php?gclid=CNn6jdqm6pMCFQaYQAodv3T-WQ>

McGruff's advice to children about bullies is practical and easily implemented. Students will enjoy reading the stories and interacting with the website.

<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp>

Another great website with resources for teachers and students to help stop and prevent bullying. There are games, articles, tips and advice.

<http://www.goodcharacter.com/>

This website is a good resource for teachers. It has many links to additional resources. There are also many descriptions of strategies that promote classroom discussion.

<http://www.character.org>

The Character Education Partnership website contains information about character education and provides many resources to help teachers imbed character education into what they do already. The eleven principles we are using to create our character education program are well defined.

www.interventioncentral.org

This website has many valuable resources including a booklet titled, "Preventing Classroom Bullying: What Teachers Can Do". Access the booklet by clicking on "Bully Prevention Booklet" under the Favorite Downloads section on the home page.

<http://charactered.ocde.us/Home.htm>

The Institute for Character Education (ICE) website contains an abundance of information related to character education and social/emotional learning. They provide research and evaluation, articles, lessons and more!

www.heartquotes.net

This website offers an abundance of quotes on different subjects such as teamwork, caring, kindness. Examples include, "A successful team beats with one heart," unknown, and, "Coming together, sharing together, working together, succeeding together," unknown.

<http://www.bu.edu/sed/caec/files/teacherresources.htm>

The Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character at Boston University School of Education hosts a phenomenal website. You can access curriculum and booklists that connect to character education for grades K-12.

“Synergy is the highest activity of life; it creates new untapped alternatives; it values and exploits the mental, emotional, and psychological differences between people.”

~Stephen Covey